1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

that from May 1950 to January 1952 in Kiangsi, 121,000 free marriages had been arranged with the assistance of the Democratic Federation of Women, more than 72,900 divorces had been instituted after the failure of attempts at reconciliation, the marriages of 16,454 child brides had been annuled, 40,920 engagements arranged by parents had been terminated, and 33,834 couples had been aided in establishing harmonious homes by the intercession of the People's Government.[27]

D. Reorientation of Family Reform

Between the time of the publication of these divorce figures in March 1953 and the end of the year, the Communist approach to marriage and family reform seemed to have undergone a change. There are indications that the regime's emphasis on new freedom for women and the prominent publicity given statistics on divorce had led to the Marriage Law being popularly termed the "Divorce Law."[28] At the same time, resistance in the rural areas to sudden changes in the old institutions of marriage and family relations were becoming evident to Party leaders as the result of the late 1952 investigations were tabulated.

A shift in the pace and in the propaganda emphasis on marriage and family reform was

27. C.B., 236, p. 4.
28. China News Analysis, 5, p. 2.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

185
596
581

evident in Liu Ching-fan's report to the Government Administrative Council at the end of 1953. Although the better treatment and greater freedom given to women was not to be neglected, greater emphasis was placed on the establishment of "harmonious" and "democratic" relationships within the family, whether originally of the old or new type, and to the positive benefits that would accrue to all members of the family as a consequence of reform.[29]

Analyzing the then current situation, Liu noted that the people still maintained a feudal ideology and consciousness in regard to many social problems, and that this attitude in respect to marriage problems was "a more universal and serious one." Liu admitted that the abolition of the feudal marriage system and the establishment of the new system was "a long term and difficult process in the ideological and social reform of the people" To accomplish this reform, he added, the regime would have to co-ordinate its efforts with the people's personal interests and levels of attainment, persuade the people patiently, and raise their level steadily. The process of implementing the Marriage Law, Liu concluded, would have to be made part of the regular tasks of the government and people's organizations at all

29. C.B., 273, pp. 5-6.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

levels and co-ordinated with the central tasks of production, construction, and elections.[30] These recommendations have become the principles by which the government still seems to be guided in marriage and family reform.

In the cities where modern influences had prepared the people for acceptance of new marriage and family principles, the regime encountered a different kind of problem. Just before International Women's Day, March 8, 1955, an authoritative statement in the Communist press added a new note to the usual references to lingering remnants of feudal obstruction and the long-term nature of family reform. The statement charged that bourgeois ideology had reached into marriage and family relationships. The bourgeois influences detected were love of luxury and disparagement of labor, "carelessness" in choosing marriage partners or the desire for new partners after marriage, and devotion to self-interest. They had respectively given rise to the sins of marriage based on money, the "belittlement of sexual relationships," and maltreatment, desertion, and irresponsibility toward parents and children.[31]

The nation's young people were evidently the most prone to this subversive influence. A

30. Ibid., pp. 4-6.
31. S.C.M.P., 1022, p. 4.